
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: City of Westminster

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Westminster, MD

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- TAB #1 Applicant Information**

- TAB #2 Sustainable Community Baseline Information - In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. Maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org.**

- TAB #3 Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**

- TAB #4 Sustainable Community Plan**

- TAB #5 Progress Measures**

- TAB #6 Local Support Resolution**

- TAB #7 Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**

**All documents on this checklist are mandatory.
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.**

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION**Name of Sustainable Community:** Westminster, MD

Legal Name of Applicant: City of Westminster

Federal Identification Number: 52-6000811

Street Address: 56 West Main Street

City: Westminster**County:** Carroll**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21157

Phone No: 410-848-9000**Fax:** 410-857-7476**Web Address:** www.westminstermd.gov

Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:**Name:** Steven Horn**Title:** Interim Director

Address: 56 W. Main**City:** Westminster**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21157

Phone No: 410-751-5505 x**Fax:** 410-857-7476**E-mail:** shorn@westgov.org

Person to be contacted for Award notification:**Name:** Steve Horn**Title:** Interim Director

Address: 56 W. Main**City:** Westminster**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21157

Phone No: 410-751-5505 x**Fax:** 410-876-7476**E-mail:** shorn@westgov.org

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV).

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization activities which will be covered in Section IV).

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area (s):

County: Carroll

Name of Sustainable Community: Westminster, MD

Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, Wolters@MdHousing.org

The proposed SC Area reflects a hybrid combination of the City's Main Street program area, the Community Legacy program area, the Maple Street program area, the City's Historic District, the Neighborhood Business Works program area, and the arts & culture overlay zone.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 481+

Existing federal, state or local designations (check all that apply):

- Community Legacy Area
- Designated Neighborhood
- Main Street
- Maple Street
- Local Historic District
- National Register Historic District
- A & E District
- State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District
- BRAC
- State Designated TOD
- Other(s): Targeted Investment Zone (TIZ)

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

(a) List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Westminster was designated a Main Street Community in 1999. Since then, leveraging public and private resources, more than \$23,836,665 has been invested in projects within the Main Street Program area. Additionally, 82 net new businesses have been established in the Main Street Program Area, resulting in the creation of 283 net new full-time and 69 net new part-time jobs.

The following listing of investments in the SC Area over the past decade further illustrates the impacts these programs have had in our community: \$75k in downtown facade improvement projects; \$175k for the Pennsylvania Avenue Streetscape project; \$100k for the Tr-Street Neighborhood Streetscape project; \$285k for Neighborhood Business Works; \$350k for Community Legacy; and, \$800k under CDBG for affordable work force housing on Union Street within the SC Area.

Using Main Street Improvement Program funds, the City acquired new trash receptacles for Main Street, parking directional signage to the downtown parking decks, signage for the downtown surface parking lots, and downtown maps for the information kiosks; designed, printed, and distributed marketing materials to promote existing businesses, along with downtown parking informational pieces; installed a Xeriscape demonstration project on Locust Lane that displays drought-resistant native plants and promotes the City's water conservation efforts; and created a "Paint Up, Fix Up" initiative providing dollar for dollar matching grants to property owners in Westminster's designated Maple Street neighborhood to make exterior improvements to residential properties.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer “cornfields”?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The biggest obstacle the City faces in meeting Smart Growth objectives, and indeed in achieving the goals established in local 'smart' comprehensive plans, is the lack of consistency amongst and between competing state government agencies that legislate (MDP) and regulate (MDE) growth patterns in the state. For example, the absence of a consistent and predictable process for water supply expansion and allocation from MDE presents challenges to private investors and City government with regard to the timely provision of utilities and infrastructure serving new growth. Absent this predictability, private investors are more likely to seek a 'path of least resistance' and pursue new construction projects either on private well and septic, or in other communities where available capacity is more readily available. In each case, the City loses revenue and development opportunities, while the State experiences a loss of more rural land to new housing or scattered commercial development beyond PFA boundaries. PlanMD may provide a valuable framework that addresses this longstanding problem at the state government level.

A listing of the more problematic obstacles to realizing Smart Growth objectives within the SC Area would include: opposition to higher density development patterns; absence of fixed route general transit opportunities to serve area residents; funding shortages in support of infrastructure improvements; and, weak historic preservation rules that fall short of the protections we need to maintain/enhance our existing built environment.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural places? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportation assets? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Housing characteristics in the City reflect a stable growth rate over an extended period of time. According to the latest Census information available, 45 percent of the City's housing stock has been built since 1980. Nearly 65 percent of the City's housing stock has been built since 1970. Consequently, the majority of housing in the City should be in a favorable condition.

The City's parks and recreational facilities are well maintained and well utilized. 14 parks, seven (7) of which are within or nearby the SC Area, offer a variety of recreational opportunities for all City residents. Access to public school facilities, such as fields and gymnasiums, are also available to residents.

The City is served by an adequate roadway network of State roads, County roads and local streets. The City uses its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to perform periodic maintenance on its streets. A revenue increase enacted in 2009, a hike of fourteen (14) cents on the City's tax rate, was dedicated to the City's streets and roadway improvements contained in the CIP and has already been used toward \$3M worth of roadway improvements.

The City also works collaboratively with the County and State on identifying and prioritizing locally significant state road improvements. The collaboration seeks to facilitate safe commute patterns and access to economic development opportunities.

The City also benefits from the availability of a locally operated transit service, the Carroll Area Transit System (CATS). CATS is a contractor to the County that provides valuable demand response services to local residents. A shoppers shuttle also provides access to shopping centers within the City and beyond.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City's 2009 Land Use Plan reflects the variety of planned and existing land uses located within the corporate limits. While the City's Zoning Code contains the typical residential, commercial and industrial types of districts, the downtown/SC Area has a Mixed Use Overlay applied as a result of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The Overlay incorporates requirements that new development must comply with certain design criteria, thereby assuring that new projects reflect and respect the existing built environment of downtown Westminster. The success of the Community Legacy program, resulting in the leveraging of over \$23M in local improvements to the downtown corridor is proof that zoning within the SC Area is conducive to revitalization investment.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities within or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Westminster City Police Department (WPD) provides the best ratio of uniformed police officers per 1,000 residents in Carroll County. The citizens of the City are well protected by the variety of law enforcement services provided by the WPD.

Carroll County's public school system is among the best in the state and consistently scores above most other school districts on the required standardized testing. The County school system also enjoys one of the strongest graduation rates in the Baltimore metro area. The St. John School, a small Catholic school located in the SC Area, also offers a quality education for school children in grades 1 - 8. Two local colleges, Carroll Community and McDaniel, are available and provide excellent educational opportunities as well as facilities for artistic expression and enjoyment.

SC Area residents enjoy the best Main Street community in Carroll County. The community is anchored by the Historical Society of Carroll County and the Carroll Arts Center. A number of other culture, arts and entertainment opportunities are available and accessible to SC Area residents and businesses, including: Lunch on the Lane Friday's; the summer music series 'Songs at 6:30' and 'Month of Sunday's'; and, the Mary Lou Dewey Park on the front lawn of the Carroll County Public Library, host to numerous outdoor performances and a sculpture garden. SC Area residents and visitors can also take in live music every week at one of a number of local eating establishments, or they can visit visual art displays at the Art Co-op or Birdie's Cafe on Main Street.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "natural environment." in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City's natural environment has benefitted from emerging technologies and regulation on development and farming practices, as well as the County's nationally recognized land preservation program. Easements on properties within and beyond the City's unincorporated growth area have resulted in decreased development impacts on tributaries to local water supplies. State imposed air quality measures have reduced pollutant discharges from local industrial and manufacturing processes, and rising concerns over pollutant loads to the Chesapeake Bay have resulted in builders and governments seeking environmentally sensitive construction practices in the City and County. Each of these measures has resulted in improvements to the City's natural environment and local quality of life measures.

The City's Tree Commission continues to monitor the health of local tree canopies, and City staff has been working with them on plans for the 19th annual Tree Workshop to be held this fall at McDaniel College. Additionally, the City's Arborist is consulted when trees are proposed for removal, and alternatives are considered where practical and reasonable.

The City has also benefitted from participation in a countywide consortium of each Municipal Government and the County Government, known as the Water Resources Coordination Council(WRCC). The WRCC worked cooperatively on the required 'Water Resources Element' under state mandate which required a comprehensive assessment and plan for future water and wastewater provisions. The WRCC is currently working on an implementation plan and is preparing to help local and county government comply with the TMDL and NPDES requirements.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon footprint" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Westminster's efforts to reduce energy and resource consumption, require Low Impact Development (LID) methods of new building projects, and the investment of tens of millions of dollars in state-of-the-art water and wastewater treatment plants are all designed to reduce negative impacts on our environment. The drafting of new development guidelines, as directed by the Mayor and Council, will assure that new development works for us in meeting the desired reduction of negative impacts resulting from new development projects. By adding environmental protections to a design manual, the City achieves environmental protections while enhancing the function and appearance of new building projects within the SC Area, and indeed, throughout the City.

Another example of this desire to improve our performance with regard to the environment is the 'Westminster Farm Fresh' initiative. This program aims to benefit local suppliers and food producers through a voluntary consortium of local farmers that incorporate sustainable farming practices and offer their products at local farmers markets. Not only are the principal production items locally grown, the Farm Fresh initiative requires that all 'value added' products, such as baked goods, jams and jellies, be handmade by the vendor. Located in the downtown Conaway Parking lot, the Market now offers 16 full season (May - November) vendors, numerous seasonal vendors, and a waiting list of vendors seeking to offer special category products (i.e. baked goods).

A listing of other efforts assisting the City in achieving its sustainable practices and environmental objectives includes: the electronic recycling project; the Farmers Market located at Antique Mall; the water conservation education program through the City's web page and newsletter; the low flow toilet and energy efficient light bulb replacement projects; and, the placement of recycling containers downtown.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City has adopted the standards for SWM as followed by the County in compliance with the SWM Act of 2010. By so doing, and by delegating the plan review function to the County, development projects in the City are held to strict SWM standards. In addition, the Mayor and Common Council, and the City Planning and Zoning Commission, are preparing draft development design guidelines to assure future development incorporates up to date treatment methods as part of new development in the City.

The City also partners with the County in the hiring of a County staff person to address the myriad requirements contained in the NPDES five year permits issued by MDE. The municipal governments in Carroll contribute the cost of the salary for the position to assure municipal compliance with the NPDES requirements. Failure to do so would put local and regional water supplies at risk, result in fines for the City, and would jeopardize future requests for funding assistance from MDE. Through the recently described WRCC, the City, County and other municipalities are well served and prepared to meet the challenges posed by compliance with NPDES and TMDL regulations.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Two key components in the realization of economic growth opportunities within the community are: (1)adequate transportation systems; and, (2) increased water supplies for new growth. Absent these two ingredients, the City will face obstacles to continuing with its current development patterns. Regarding the local transportation system, the proximity of the SC Area to the Carroll County Regional Airport is a system strength and an asset to the larger community. Transit also factors into the equation as an economic development issue: the lack of a wider range transit system limits the ability of employers to lure new workers to the area. And without new water supplies, long standing annexation petitions for new development projects that could offer housing choices for citizens across the income spectrum will go unheard. As such, the City faces daily challenges to maintain adequate capacities and to meet growing demands for service from current residents and businesses.

Westminster is fortunate to have been a part of the County's recent rural broadband initiative in which municipalities and businesses in Carroll were hooked up to a rapidly expanding broadband network. The access provided to the network makes competing in the metro area easier for local businesses and new start-ups.

With Carroll's unemployment rate relatively low, employment opportunities are enhanced through experiences gained at the Business and Employment Resources Center (BERC) in Westminster. Interviewing, resume building, and interpersonal skills are just a few of the job training opportunities available to SC Area residents and others. The local branch of the state's Small Business Development Center also offers valuable insights to prospective candidates.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs - both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI and 50% AMI. What efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City's housing market has been negatively effected by prevailing fiscal conditions since the national economic downturn. While over 250 HUD housing certificates are adminisitered by the City, and other programs have been put to use via CDBG, Episcopal Housing Corporation, and Habitat for Humanity, we've had difficulty marketing and selling a number of units currently available to lower income individuals.

Through a joint venture with the Episcopal Housing Corporation (EHC), the City and EHC agreed to build nine townhomes and to make them available at below market rates. Four of the nine have been built and remain on the market. The City and EHC continue to explore alternatives to successfully marketing the units. In this instance, the use of an \$800k CDBG loan and the waiver of impact fees by Carroll County, are examples of the City's creative approach to expanding housing choices for lower income families.

According to the most recent Westminster Public Housing Agency (PHA) 5 Year and Annual Report, there are currently 329 active applicants on the HUD wait list, 81.46% are Extremely Low income, 10.03% very low income and 0.30% low income. There are 25 elderly families, 140 Disabled, and 161 families with Children. The City of Westminster has approximately 250 Landlords and currently has 125 active Landlords on the Housing program. The City has added and continues to add new landlords to the Housing program. There are 755 registered units in the City of Westminster, and there are roughly 3300 total rental units.

The Fair Market Rate (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1137.00 In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$4,010 monthly or \$48,210 annually. Assuming a 40 hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of \$23.13. In 2009, the City of Westminster median renters wage is \$9.01 an hour. The affordable rent at this wage is \$469.00. Clearly, there is a need for additional vouchers. Without the aid of the vouchers, the very low income families would not be able to afford the average rent.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors). (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City has historically maintained a stable population growth rate of approximately 2.8% per year. Like most jurisdictions, the City's population is aging as baby boomers continue to move up in years. Combined minority populations (African Americans, Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics or Latinos) in the City typically account for less than 10 percent of the total population.

City residents are generally well educated with over 80% having earned high school diplomas, while roughly 25% have earned a college or professional degree.

Housing options in the City are much more varied than they are in the unincorporated portion of Carroll County. Westminster's housing types range from single family detached to residential buildings housing over 50 units. Approximately 43% of all housing units in the City are multi-family units. Housing densities are generally higher in the SC Area than they are in nearby neighborhoods and the newer communities built outside the downtown area and off MD 140. The average rate of owned vs. rented units is approximately 60 percent owned and 40 percent rented city-wide.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Organizational Structure:

Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Westminster is organized under 5 departments – Finance & Administrative Services; Planning, Zoning and Development; Police; Public Works; and, Recreation & Parks that report to the City Administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the City. The department heads meet bi-weekly with the City Administrator. Additionally, there is a monthly meeting at the supervisory level to ensure project coordination across departmental lines.

Organizational Membership on the Sustainable Communities Workgroup will include:

1. The City of Westminster represented by Mayor Kevin R. Utz, City Administrator Marge Wolf, and Administrator of Economic Development Stan Ruchlewicz
2. Downtown Westminster Main Street Program represented by Lori Welsh-Graham, Chair of the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program Committee
3. Greater Westminster Development Corporation represented by Dr. Ethan Seidel, Chairman
4. McDaniel College represented by Dr. Ethan Seidel, Vice President of Administration and Finance
5. Westminster Town Center Corporation represented by Jacob M. Yingling, President
6. Historical Society of Carroll County represented by Timatha S. Pierce, Executive Director
7. Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Public Library represented by Christina Kuntz, Manager
8. Downtown Westminster Farmers Market Committee/Westminster Farm Fresh represented by Jackie Coldsmith, Chair
9. Downtown Westminster Business and Property Owners represented by Bob Coffey, proprietor of Coffey Music; Harry Sirinakakis, Proprietor of Harry's Main Street Grille; and David Johansson, Proprietor of Johansson Dining House and O'Lordans Irish Pub
10. Maple Street Property Owners represented by Lyndi McNulty

Mayor Kevin Utz will serve as the Workgroup Chair. In his Capacity as Mayor, he can ensure coordination amongst the City departments in the implementation of the Sustainable Communities Plan.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

B. Organizational Experience:

Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Westminster has extensive experience in successfully administering revitalization plans and projects while using an array of funding sources. The City has used the Community Legacy Program to: (1) renovate a 1970's era pedestrian walkway into a performance space while making storefronts handicap accessible along Locust Lane; (2) make streetscape improvements along Pennsylvania Avenue that promoted pedestrian safety and traffic calming; (3) install pedestrian friendly streetlights along Pennsylvania Avenue, W. Main Street and Union Street to enhance public safety; (4) construct a community center to provide vital community services, such as after school programs, senior citizen skill enhancement and family support services; and, (5) provide incentive grants to home buyers within Old Town Westminster to assist with closing costs.

The City of Westminster facilitated 7 Neighborhood Business Works loans for businesses to expand in Downtown Westminster. They include: Coffey Music; Harry's Main Street Grill; Paradiso Ristorante; and, Kohn Design & Printing to name just a few. The City was instrumental in assisting the Carroll County Arts Council to obtain Neighborhood Business Works grant funding to renovate the old Carroll Theater into an arts center. The City used the State's Local Government Infrastructure Finance Program to construct the Longwell Parking Deck and reconstruct West Green Street.

Westminster was designated a Main Street Community in 1999. Since then, leveraging public and private resources, more than \$23,836,665 has been invested in projects within the Main Street Program area. Additionally, 82 net new businesses have been established in the Main Street Program Area, resulting in the creation of 283 net new fulltime and 69 net new part-time jobs.

The Westminster Town Center Corporation (WTCC) is a "bricks and mortar" development corporation established in 1996. Their efforts in Downtown Westminster began by stabilizing the "Old Stone Building" on Liberty Street. Upon stabilization, they sought redevelopment proposals from developers. O'Lordans Irish Pub at 14 Liberty Street, now a major destination in Downtown Westminster, was the end result. Using Neighborhood Business Works Program grants, they have facilitated the completion of 31 façade projects.

Many of the members of the SC Workgroup have overseen planning and revitalization efforts at their own facilities. The Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Public Library has recently undergone a \$1.6 million renovation, which also created an outstanding outdoor public space that includes a stage and an area for a sculpture garden.

Mc Daniel College has an ever-changing campus, with new dormitories and classroom buildings being built at a very frequent basis. In the middle of these projects is Dr. Seidel who understands the need to plan and implement according to a plan.

Many of these organizations and their representatives have worked successfully together in the past, which is a major strength when trying to coordinate and implement the Sustainable Communities Plan. As a 510 (c) (3), the WTCC provides the Workgroup with the flexibility to apply for funds that the City of Westminster cannot. The main capacity challenge will be, of course, adequate funding to accomplish the capital projects outlined in the Plan. This challenge is followed by the limited staff capacity available due to budget cuts.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action Plan described below in Section IV? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Many, if not all, of the actions proposed in the Action Plan are a compilation of projects developed under the City's Comprehensive Plan, Community Legacy Plan, Westminster Town Center Plan (a.k.a. MD 27 Corridor Study) or the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program Work Plans. Other opportunities for public input and comment were offered during the City's Arts & Entertainment Task Force proceedings, the Tri-Street Neighborhood initiative, and the Vision Workshop and citizen survey conducted preparatory to the City Comprehensive Plan effort. All of these plans and programs benefitted from public input and comment opportunities.

The SC Area Map, Work Group and application overview were offered at the August 22, 2011, meeting of the Mayor and Common Council.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a sustainable and livable community.

A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.

(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Westminster, as Carroll County seat, is the government and commerce center of the County. As such, the City is the largest PFA in the County, owns and operates its local water and wastewater systems, is home to the County's premier economic development opportunities, and serves as one of Carroll's premier Main Street communities. Through collaborative approaches to growth and development management, the City continues to honor its City/County Agreement which provides financial and in-kind assistance in exchange for facilitating a focused (aka 'smart') development pattern. Major investments in state-of-the-art water and wastewater treatment plants, including state and local contributions, have been /are being made in support of Westminster's smart residential, commercial, industrial and institutional growth.

A significant recent accomplishment has been the convergence of land preservation programs (under the County's jurisdiction) with the City's need for water recharge credits. Under the program, land preservation easements now convey water recharge credits to the local municipality as part of the new 'own and control' requirement under MDE regulations. By creating the recharge credit mechanism, the City and County jointly achieve the preservation of valuable farmland/open space within the watershed, while also creating the necessary water capacity for growth to occur in accord with locally adopted smart growth plans. Without this program, sprawling development patterns are continued while private well and septic systems are permitted beyond the City's boundary.

Another accomplishment over the past decade has been the success of the Main Street program. By leveraging over \$23M in public and private investment, this program has resulted in the creation of over 80 new businesses, 280 new full time jobs, 70 new part time jobs, and numerous functional and aesthetic improvements throughout the Main Street/downtown area.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City has constructed a new, \$10.5M state-of-the-art water treatment plant utilizing the first large scale membrane technology in the State. The City's system has been used as a model by other large treatment plants in the State as a tool to facilitate growth while maximizing the benefits municipal governments can gain from the efficient use of our most precious natural resource.

Through the efficient use of groundwater from a nearby active quarry at Medford, the City has established a stand-by water supply to be used in the event of a future drought or other public emergency. The \$4.5M system is in place and permitted by the State to provide up to 655,000 gpd if needed.

On the wastewater side, the City is about to embark upon the largest single construction project in its history: a new \$25M WWTP that will utilize the latest technologies in cleaning the wastewater before it reenters the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

A new revenue source, approved by the Mayor and Common Council in 2009, was specifically designated for roadway improvements and other capital projects that benefit the City's infrastructure. The fourteen cent increase has already yielded results: over \$3M in new capital funds has been spent on City street improvements and other infrastructure projects supporting local citizens, businesses and institutions.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of "green" building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of "Buy Local" approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Mayor and Common Council, and the City Planning and Zoning Commission, are teaming up to draft the first 'Residential and Commercial Development Design Preferences' manual. The intent of the manual is to present creative alternatives for development/redevelopment projects within the City regarding building architecture, site design issues (i.e., lighting, landscaping, signage, layout), and efficient use/protection of natural resources (i.e., water, land, rainfall, landscape, etc.). Low Impact Development (LID) practices, such as, permeable paving, vegetated swales, bioretention areas, cisterns/rain barrels, and reduced building footprints will be incorporated in the manual. Water saving measures, such as low flow plumbing fixtures, will be mandatory for new development projects. By taking this comprehensive, inclusive approach to new and redevelopment projects within the City generally, and within the SC Area in particular, the City assures that community character is maintained while environmental/resource issues are fully addressed.

A new initiative to reuse the City's treated wastewater will be applied to an expansion project at a local business in the City. Priority Food Group (PFG, Inc.) and the City are exploring the feasibility of utilizing treated wastewater as part of the new non-contact cooling process to be established at their storage and distribution facility. The environmentally safe and fiscally efficient reuse of treated wastewater assists the City in meeting its resource protection objectives while facilitating local economic growth and investment. Using water several times to save current jobs, and create new ones, multiplies the benefits of public and private investments in the City.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

A number of local groups and organizations will be key partners in the realization of the objectives noted within this section. Specifically, and perhaps most importantly, the Mayor and Common Council of the City will be fundamentally involved in the approval of, and funding for, the initiatives anticipated. Advising the Mayor and Council will be numerous groups made up of individuals having an interest in moving the City forward, including: the Greater Westminster Development Corporation; the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program; McDaniel College; the Arts & Culture Task Force; Tri-Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee; and, the Westminster Town Center Corporation. Through an open and public process, inviting public review and comment, the Mayor and Common Council will benefit from the advisory opinions offered by these local groups.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities:

(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City owns and operates a total of 14 parks comprising 50 acres. Seven (7) of these parks are located within our SC Area or are within walking distance of residents of the Area.

The Family Fitness Center is housed in the historic Armory along with the Westminster Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices. This full-service health and wellness center for all ages has a full indoor basketball court, selectorized and free weight equipment, a cardiovascular center, and a group fitness classes. The Family Fitness Center provides a comfortable environment for visitors by providing child supervision, game rooms, and locker rooms. The Armory is located within the SC Area where it neighbors the City Park.

The Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Public Library system is located on 50 East Main Street, in the heart of our SC Area. The library houses a large collection of popular reading and reference materials for children, young adults, and adults. In addition, the library offers extensive programs for children of all ages. Bookmobile van service is also available on an outreach basis for the residents of Westminster and Carroll County. The library also serves a public space to host community meetings, lectures and classes.

The Carroll County Arts Center is located on the west side of the SC Area and serves as an anchor to our Arts and Culture Neighborhood. Opened in April of 2003, the renovated facility includes a 263-seat theatre, two well-equipped art classrooms, and two large art galleries. The Center offers a wealth of cultural opportunities including musical concerts, lectures, films, dramatic productions, art exhibits, classes, and camps.

McDaniel College is a private liberal-arts college located within our SC Area. The college enrolls 1,600 full-time undergraduates and close to 5,000 graduate students. Besides the families that visit throughout the year, the campus also hosts events that attract non-student visitors. These events include concerts, theatrical productions, conferences, sporting events, and summer sports camps for middle-school and high-school aged students. Students, teachers and visitors provide a constant source of foot traffic Downtown that is beneficial for Main Street businesses. Residents of our Sustainable Community Area also benefit from community outreach efforts by the McDaniel students such as volunteering to beautify Main Street and to lead classes at the Westminster Community Center.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community's authentic "sense of place" and historic character? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Westminster's identity is based on a vibrant Main Street community and cultural diversity. The small town character and historic charm of the City is found in Westminster's historic buildings, neighborhoods and streetscapes. In order to protect Westminster's quality of life, community character and city identity, efforts will be made to preserve the historical, cultural and natural resources of Westminster. City staff is working with the Historic Distric Commission (HDC) to adopt a set of residential and commercial development design preferences to encourage new development/redevelopment in the City's downtown area to incorporate elements of Main Street's existing built environment within their proposals. Limitations on lighting, signage and building designs will be incorporated in an effort to maintain and enhance what is unique and attractive about the City's SC Area.

Westminster was designated a 'Main Street Maryland' Community in 1999 and has been a driving force in the tourism industry of Carroll County ever since. The program has been very successful: \$23M of private and public resources leveraged and invested in the community; 80 new businesses established; 283 full time/69 part time jobs created; downtown directional signage added; downtown maps placed at strategic locations; promotional marketing materials for downtown businesses developed and distributed; and, created a dollar-for-dollar 'paint up/fix up' initiative for exterior residential improvements in the Maple Street neighborhood.

There are 1,300 properties listed in Westminster's National Registry District. Unfortunately, previous decisions have resulted in a lack of adequate protections for the buildings and properties contained within the historic district. Through working cooperatively with local groups supporting historic preservation of the downtown and neighboring communities, such as the Historical Society of Carroll County (HSCC) and the Belle Grove Square Neighborhood Association, the City continues to take positive actions to rectify previous shortcomings. The HSCC, for example, has recently completed the comprehensive renovation of 216 East Main Street building, locally known as Cockey's Tavern. The building now includes a new exhibit space, museum shop and learning center. The HSCC is an active caretaker of three buildings on Main Street which benefits the overall community.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.*(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

An update to the City's inventory of street trees on public property and rights-of-way along Main Street, including adjoining neighborhoods within the SC Area, will be conducted by the Westminster Tree Commission (WTC). The Plan will also assist the City in meeting the "Maryland One Million Tree Initiative."

Another effort will entail connecting City parks and open space with a system of trails, pedestrian pathways, and bicycle routes. The City will work with the Carroll County Parks and Recreation Board to develop plans to link Carroll County trails and paths with City trails, bike paths and open space.

The adopted 2009 Westminster Community Comprehensive Plan established a framework of lands for parks, open space and trails, to be developed in conjunction with public and private sector improvement projects. An example of such a partnership occurred in 2009 with the development of "Overlook at King's Park," where instead of adding open space to the subject site, the developer donated money to improve King's Park, a nearby city-owned park located within the SC Area.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

A number of local groups will play an integral part in meeting the objectives contained in this section, including: Carroll County Parks and Recreation Board; Carroll County Public Library; McDaniel College; Carroll Arts Center; Historical Society of Carroll County; and, the Westminster Tree Commission.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness

(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City will pursue a number of new initiatives, and expand upon those efforts already in place and meeting with some success, in an effort to improve the economy within the SC Area and throughout the City. Among the programs to be continued are: the Downtown Westminster Facade Program; the Downtown Main Street Program (assisted the City in the creation of 82 new businesses since the beginning of the program); and, the County Economic Development Office's 'Business Recruitment, Visitation and Invitation Program'.

Several beneficial programs are proposed to be expanded, including: the City's inter-relationships with the Miller Institute for Small Business at the Carroll Community College (over 6,000 students enrolled in work force training at CCC) and the Small Business Development Center; the Business Information Section presented on the City's Main Street Program and Office of Economic Development webpages; the 'Be Smart Business' energy efficiency program; the marketing of downtown in partnership with the County's Economic Development Office beyond Carroll's borders to broaden the City's appeal and market potential. The City will also explore the feasibility of establishing a revolving loan fund for new and expanded retail-oriented businesses within the SC Area that will help to grow the local economy through investments in small business and other key economic sectors.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

While there is no specific target number for job creation, a number of new workforce initiatives, in addition to those noted above, are proposed to increase economic activity and job creation within the SC Area and Westminster's downtown, including: jointly marketing downtown with the County Economic Development Commission (EDC) to BRAC businesses; establishing a 'fast-track' permitting process for downtown businesses proposing to retain or create jobs; establishing CATS bus destinations within the SC Area to promote local transit access to job opportunities within the SC Area; and, developing a continuing education training series for downtown businesses geared toward business retention and creation.

The continued use of the programs and services available at to residents at the Business and Employment Resources Center (BERC) will assist in training and work force preparations. BERC provides a one stop shop of workforce development tools for job seekers and businesses both within the SC Area and countywide.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4) (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Westminster, as the County Government Seat, is expected to see some benefit from BRAC activities. The Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) anticipates Carroll County will experience an increase of over 400 new housing units and 325 jobs as a result of BRAC related activities (BMC BRAC Report, 2006). According to the BMC, the new jobs will be 'indirect' employment opportunities with 90 percent of them in Phase 2 (2010-2015) of BRAC activities. By creating opportunity through the measures noted in this application, the SC Area is poised to gain some benefit from BRAC in light of Carroll's location roughly in the center of the triangle formed by Fort Meade, Fort Detrick and the Aberdeen Proving Ground.

New initiatives, such as closer working relationships and downtown marketing efforts with the Small Business Office in the County's Economic Development Office, the 'Business Recruitment and Retention Program', and a 'fast track' permit review and issuance program will make the downtown area an attractive location for expansion and new businesses.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The following groups and organizations will be key players in the successful realization of the objectives contained in this section: the City Mayor and Common Council; the MD Department of Housing and Community Development; Carroll's Economic Development Office and Economic Development Commission; the Greater Westminster Development Corporation; the Miller Small Business Institute at Carroll Community College; Main Street Program; the local office of the Small Business Development Corporation; Carroll Area Transit System (CATS); Carroll County's BEREC; and, the Westminster Town Center Corporation.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.

(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The SC Area contains a number of continuing and proposed building projects with the goal of facilitating improved housing affordability, choices and access for local residents that meet the benchmarks discussed in Section II. Among the initiatives proposed are the following projects: continued utilization of CDBG funds in partnership with Episcopal Housing Corporation to facilitate the sale of 4 existing townhomes, and the construction of 5 more, to low income residents in the Tri-Street Neighborhood; continued administration of over 250 housing vouchers for low income residents through Housing & Urban Development (HUD); and, identified and signed bus stops for Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) buses to promote access to housing choices, shopping opportunities via the CATS Shopper's Shuttle program, and medical facilities to meet the needs of residents. The City will also continue its relationship with Habitat for Humanity and will seek opportunities to collaborate on additional living units, such as those recently constructed on Union Street and Hersh Avenue, within the SC Area.

The City of Westminster Housing Authority will continue to apply for funding when available. They will pursue any additional grants that could assist with low and extremely low income families and disabled individuals within the City and will continue to market the Family Self-Sufficiency Program to attain economic self-sufficiency and assist families with their goals of homeownership. We will also continue to pursue additional Family Unification Program Vouchers as they become available.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The successful implementation of the projects and initiatives noted in this application will result in more residents having access to Carroll's inter-county transit service (CATS) and local/countywide shopping opportunities presented via the CATS Shopper's Shuttle.

Greater numbers of local residents will be able to walk to employment, shopping and recreational opportunities offered throughout the downtown/SC Area. Access to the City parks, located within and nearby the SC Area, will be enhanced. Employment opportunities offered by Main Street and downtown merchants within the SC Area will also be more readily accessible. In addition, the job training services and new business start up resources, available at BEREC and the Small Business Development Office at the County Office Building, will be easily accessed.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Through improved access to more affordable, below market housing units, the City intends to continue to improve access and affordability with regard to its housing stock. City residents, ranging from very low to low/moderate incomes, and including the disabled and seniors, will benefit from the strategies and initiatives outlined herein. Continued pursuit of, and improvements to, local, state and federal programs, as outlined in this section and Section II, will steadily increase the number of residents benefitting from these efforts to boost homeownership and rental housing opportunities.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The success of the proposals contained within this section will rely upon the active participation and support of the following organizations and agencies: the Mayor and Common Council; Carroll Area Transit System (CATS); HUD; City Housing Authority; Episcopal Housing Corporation; CDBG; Habitat for Humanity; and, the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

E. Support transportation efficiency and access.

(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Transportation opportunities are a major challenge for businesses and citizens that reside within or near the SC Area. With a countywide paratransit service and small taxi service provider, transportation choices are limited. As a lifestyle issue, residents that have limited mobility are not free to take advantage of local programs that may benefit them or their family. As an economic development issue, business are forced to provide their own network of transportation at a cost to their business and the employee. In addition, lack of transportation access limits the area where a resident can patronize local businesses, thereby negatively impacting the merchants bottom line.

A comprehensive transportation policy, taking advantage of local oportunities and building on programs offered at the regional level would benefit residents and businesses in the SC Area. Through participation at the Metroplitan Council in Baltimore (BMC), Carroll County represents the municipal governments and advocates for local investments in the transportation system. Locally significant roadway projects, as well as pedestrian facilities, rideshare programs and transit improvements are discussed and funded through this forum. Greater coordination of local needs on these important access and mobility issues will improve quality of life for residents and profitability for local businesses.

Improved coordination with the local transit provider will also benefit the SC Area and its residents and businesses. Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) is a private non-profit organization that provides public transportation services throughout Carroll County. CATS provides two types of transit services. The first service is an advanced reservation service, where people can schedule trips up to seven days in advance. The second service consists of four Deviated Fixed Route Carroll Transit Shuttles; buses with specific stops at designated times that can go off fixed routes for deviation. The shuttle is an excellent option for residents living in the Sustainable Community Area and do not have vehicle to get them to services or stores on MD 140 (or those not in walking distance). However, many residents are unaware of the shuttle or that there are "bus stops" near their home. Better outreach will result in increased ridership and mobility for citizens.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3) (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

n/a

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The key groups and stakeholders involved with transportation issues in the City are: CATS; County representatives to the BMC; providers of specialized transportation services for specific populations (i.e., ARC, Target, Change); the local Transportation Advisory Board; the County Commissioners of Carroll County (maintaining funding for CATS and continued participation at the BMC); and, the Mayor and Common Council.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Members of the SC Work Group are experienced program and budget managers at a variety of levels in and around Westminster. The combination of public and private sector experience, program diversity, and collaboration with the City government allows for a thorough review and elimination of obstacles to seamless and efficient program management. Through the use of management oversight meetings, automated databases of funding administration, and periodic reports to members by program managers, the Work Group will identify and correct any inefficiencies in a timely manner. Sub groups may be formed to work on program specific objectives as the need arises. Program updates will be provided to the Mayor and Common Council to assure efficient operations and program goals are being met.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

A number of parallels exist between the proposed SC Action Plan and several of the City's functional planning documents. For example, the 2009 City Comprehensive Plan promotes many of the Action Plan's objectives, including: improved transportation opportunities for residents and businesses; sustainable development practices for both private and public sector development projects; continued attention to the downtown area through the use of creative zoning techniques that protect and enhance historic structures; resource conservation measures and Low Impact Development (LID) measures on all new development projects; and, methods to promote downtown investment/reinvestment to the benefit of local businesses and residents.

Additionally, the proposed Action Plan builds upon past successes of plans and programs that are taking advantage of state funding programs, such as Community Legacy, Neighborhood Business Works, and Main Street programs.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

Through the identification of projects contained herein, the SC Work Goup has a blueprint for the continuation of existing successful programs, and the creation of new initiatives, to meet the needs of a growing and diverse Main Street community. Further quantification of the costs and benefits attributed to the proposals will provide opportunities for administrative follow-up and the necessary applications for funding sources.

The combined networks presented by the membership on the SC Work Group can offer unique opportunities to leverage public dollars with private investments toward the goal of improving the fiscal environment for downtown reinvestment. As evidenced by the success of the programs discussed previously in the Action Plan, it is clear the downtown Westminster community presents an excellent opportunity for continued and expanded public and private investment.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

For the Plan parts of section IV (A through F):

(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

TRANSPORTATION

Projects underway:

- Coordinate with Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) to sustain and improve the local bus transit system to serve both transit-dependent and discretionary riders by marketing the availability of the shuttle service and marking the shuttle routes.
- Under a Community Legacy Grant, continue the installation of street level lighting on Pennsylvania Avenue.
- In conjunction with State Highway Administration and Carroll County Tourism, complete installation of signage on main travel arteries for downtown tourist attractions.

HOUSING

Projects underway:

- With funding from HOME, CDBG, the City of Westminster and Carroll County, finalize the sale of four (4) completed units in the Episcopal Housing Project on Union Street.
- Successfully complete the sale of the City's renovated house at 18 Union Street.
- Using Maple Street grant funds carry out remaining 2 residential facade improvement projects - total of 5 residential facades in this funding cycle.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Projects underway:

- Coordinating with Carroll County Public Library on developing the sculpture garden at the Westminster Branch on Main Street.
- Finalizing Neighborhood Business Works and Community Legacy renovations to 5 commercial building facades on Main Street.
- Coordinating with Carroll County Chamber of Commerce and County Tourism Office to hold the first ever Restaurant Week with 26 participating restaurants (week of 8/21).
- Purchasing and installing Arts and Culture flags on Main Street buildings that house residential artists, art centers and commercial arts stores in fulfillment of an Arts and Culture Task Force recommendation.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & FACILITIES

Projects underway:

- Completing the 'Community Trail'- funded with State Highway Administration and Project Open Space Community Parks and Playground funds.
- Extending local historic district tax credits for 5 properties.
- Historic District Commission reviewing repairs and maintenance projects for the Westminster City Hall.
- Developing a 'Friends of the Park' program to secure non-profit and community groups adopting and helping to maintain neighborhood parks.
- Facilitating local Tree Commission activities
- Concluding Main Street Scavenger Hunt activity for residents

ENVIRONMENT & SMART GROWTH

Projects underway:

- Developing 'Residential and Commercial Development Design Preferences' manual for new and redevelopment projects; includes mandatory low impact development measures.
- Finalizing plans for a state of the art, \$27 million wastewater treatment plant project; upgrade from BNR to ENR facility; MD to pay 65% of total cost.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

TRANSPORTATION:

- Assure that downtown shopping locations are included on the CATS shoppers shuttle fixed route service.
- Identify and provide signage for future service stops along Main and Pennsylvania Avenues for CATS riders.

HOUSING:

- Complete the construction and sale of the five (5) remaining units in the Episcopal Housing Project on Union Street.
- Seek continuation of funding for residential facade improvement projects.
- Establish rental licensing program to assure quality rental housing availability.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Welcome the Baltimore Ravens back to Westminster!
- Seek funding for 5 additional commercial building facade improvements.
- Implement the first waste water reuse project in the City - resulting in a Westminster Company expanding its operation with a 70,000 square foot refrigerated warehouse.
- Implement the first ever Employment Tax Credit for the Knorr-Brake expansion project (200,000 square feet).
- Schedule a Spring Restaurant Week in Carroll County
- Schedule additional Lacrosse (LAXMAX conducted Summer, 2011) and soccer tournaments to attract visitors to Westminster
- Conduct survey at McDaniel College to gauge downtown business needs of students.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & FACILITIES:

- Prepare plans to restore and maintain two historic institutional structures in Westminster: Westminster City Hall and the Longwell Armory.
- Conduct 19th Annual Forestry workshop at McDaniel College
- Connect 'Community Trail' with downtown.

ENVIRONMENT& SMART GROWTH:

- Apply new design manual preferences and requirements to all development and redevelopment projects within the downtown area.
- Continue revenue sharing under City/County agreement to assist with PFA focused development.

REPLACE THIS PAGE WITH
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT
RESOLUTIONS

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION
DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the “Department”) to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine your eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland’s Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the “Act”). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. You have the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public certain information regarding projects recommended for funding in the Sustainable Community Plan. The information available to the public will include the information in this application, as may be supplemented or amended. This information may be confidential under the Act. If you consider this information confidential and do not want it made available to the public, please indicate that in writing and attach the same to this application.

You agree that not attaching an objection constitutes your consent to the information being made available to the public and a waiver of any rights you may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant’s Initials: _____

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this financial assistance application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such application, is subject to immediate cancellation of financial assistance and other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Sustainable Communities Plan or Project(s) proposed in this Application can be accomplished and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Authorized Signature

Print Name and Title

Date